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Letter dated 6 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey information on the measures taken by the Government of Uzbekistan to ensure the labour rights of citizens in accordance with national legislation and international labour standards (see annex).

I would appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 72.

(*Signed*) Bakhtiyor **Ibragimov**

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Annex to the letter dated 6 October 2017 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Measures taken by the Government of Uzbekistan to ensure the guaranteed labour rights of citizens in accordance with national legislation and international labour standards

Over the years of independence in Uzbekistan, a solid legal foundation has been established which has created the conditions to ensure in practice the universally recognized right of all persons to work, free choice of occupation and fair working conditions. These fundamental social rights, enshrined in international instruments, have been embodied in the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan and in national legislation, which clearly set forth the prohibition of the use of child and forced labour.

Uzbekistan, as a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), has ratified 14 ILO Conventions, including on the inadmissibility of child and forced labour, and their provisions have been consistently put into effect in national legislation.

Uzbekistan has established close and productive cooperation with ILO in this sphere. In particular, the Decent Work Country Programme for the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2020, which envisages a range of measures to protect citizens' rights in the area of labour relations, is currently being implemented. Through constructive cooperation with ILO, the country's international image has been significantly improved and tangible successes have been achieved.

A coordinating council on child and forced labour is operating effectively in Uzbekistan. Alongside State bodies, civil and community human rights institutions are also carrying out activities to monitor the situation in this regard.

The measures taken have made it possible to achieve significant results. In particular, child and forced labour have been completely eradicated in Uzbekistan. Since 2014, Uzbekistan has not been included in the list of States which have serious shortcomings in complying with ILO conventions.

In the Strategy of action in five priority areas of development of the Republic of Uzbekistan, adopted this year, one of the priorities has been identified as ensuring guarantees of the reliable protection of citizens' rights and freedoms. The guarantees of citizens' labour rights have been further strengthened by another vital initiative in 2017, namely the Year of dialogue with the people and of promoting human interests.

Uzbekistan, resolutely confirming its commitment to its international obligations and to the observance of human rights and freedoms and having instituted strict monitoring of the further protection of citizens' guaranteed labour rights in line with international standards, is open to constructive international cooperation in this sphere.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of all work to counter the risks of forced labour, particular attention is being paid at the current stage to ensuring that the measures taken in the sphere of labour relations are comprehensive and systematic and that effective use is made of the potential for social partnership between State bodies and public organizations.

In the area of preventing risks of forced labour, particularly in agriculture, consistent efforts are being made to resolve a number of urgent issues in respect of the modernization of agriculture, enhancement of the level of mechanization of the agrarian sector and introduction of innovative technologies in this sphere.

In accordance with a recent decree of the upper chamber of Uzbekistan's legislative body — the Senate of the *Oliy Majlis* — a parliamentary commission on ensuring citizens' guaranteed labour rights is currently being established. In order to ensure transparency in the commission's work and provide for systematic parliamentary monitoring, a procedure is being introduced whereby the commission will regularly submit for consideration by the plenary session of the Senate of the *Oliy Majlis* information on the findings of review of the work done by the directors of State bodies and other organizations at the central level and locally in implementing the legislation and international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan associated with ensuring citizens' guaranteed labour rights, including the prevention and inadmissibility of the use of forced labour. In turn, corresponding territorial commissions will regularly submit relevant information for consideration by the *Joqarg'i Ken'es* of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the regional and Tashkent city *kengashi* of people's deputies.

In addition, under the Senate decree, a set of measures was approved to ensure citizens' guaranteed labour rights, in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan and international labour standards, envisaging a number of steps for enhancement of legislation, monitoring of the implementation of ratified ILO conventions, cooperation with ILO and other international organizations, capacity-building of State bodies and civil society organizations, and information and outreach work in this sphere.

In accordance with the decree, the Government will adopt comprehensive measures to further incorporate market mechanisms and scientific and technological advances in the agricultural sphere, increase the level of mechanization of agriculture, introduce new varieties of cotton plants suited to the broad use of mechanized harvesting and ensuring maximum impact of the mechanization of agricultural production, and also develop various methods of economic stimulus for invited seasonal workers and formulate proposals to regulate labour relations in this and other spheres.

In the decree, special attention is paid to the participation of non-State non-commercial organizations and other civil society institutions in carrying out public monitoring of the strict implementation of labour legislation at the local level, conducting a wide-ranging information and outreach campaign on these issues among the public, and other activities.

In this regard, the parliamentary commission on managing the resources of the public fund to support non-State non-commercial organizations and other civil society institutions attached to the *Oliy Majlis* of the Republic of Uzbekistan has recommended consideration of the question of providing subsidies, grants and public commissions to non-State non-commercial organizations in order to carry out, within the framework of social partnership, targeted programmes to create decent working conditions and strengthen the guarantees of citizens' labour rights.

All in all, the decree adopted by the Senate will serve to strengthen the effectiveness of parliamentary and public monitoring of the implementation by State and managerial bodies of the norms of the legislation and international treaties of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the protection of citizens' labour rights and the inadmissibility of any form of forced labour.